

CD NO

DATE DISTR. 30 NOV 51

NO. OF PAGES 2

NO. OF ENCLS
(LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

RETURN TO CIA
LIBRARY

25X1X

- CLASSIFICATION

Document No. 003
No Change in Class. ☒
☐ Declassified
Class. Changed To: TS S C
Auth.: HR 70-2
Date: 25/08/78 By: 408
P82-0045/R009200370003-1

CONFIDENTIAL/CONTROL - U.S. OFFICIALS ONLY

25X1A

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

- 2 -

25X1X

2. [REDACTED] In the course of discussion, Gedda stated that, if an agreement were reached, Catholic Action could place very large sums at the disposal of its allies.

- 25X1A 3. [REDACTED] Probably Nino Savarese, the novelist, essayist and Right Wing journalist, age 65, is intended.

25X1X

[REDACTED] Two interesting articles have recently appeared in the press: one is by Gedda and can be readily interpreted as anti-Christian Democratic in tone, the other is an unsigned "elucidation" in the Osservatore Romano (the Vatican organ) which confirms the Vatican's confidence in the Christian Democratic Party. It is not difficult, by reading between the lines, to divine what Vatican policy towards the Christian Democratic Party really is.

On the one hand, the Vatican is preoccupied by the recent considerable increase in strength of the right-wing parties, particularly as regards the youth of the country, although in southern Italy young and old alike have tended strongly to be drawn in that direction. The Christian Democratic Party's loss in popularity is especially worrying, and it is feared that the Party is likely to become increasingly unpopular in view of the continually worsening internal economic situation and of the Party's lack of success in the international field with regard to the problems of Trieste and the Peace Treaty. What makes this situation all the more serious is that it has developed in spite of the Vatican's unremitting efforts to exercise control over the country's youth and guide it into the paths of Truth.

On the other hand, the Vatican is faced with an uncomfortable dilemma. Clearly it cannot go on counting entirely on the Christian Democratic Party as hitherto. For one thing, the factors mentioned above are adversely affecting the Party's prestige, and for another the morality and integrity of individual Christian Democratic politicians in office have been persistently and most plausibly impugned. Equally clearly, however, the Vatican cannot at this stage do a complete turnabout and support political groups which are notoriously "reactionary" for fear of provoking a minor landslide to the ranks of the left-wing parties.

The Vatican's best bet is obviously to keep a foot in each camp. It would appear that it has decided to use Catholic Action in order to perform this exercise. Vittorio Veronese, President of Catholic Action, unequivocally supports the Christian Democratic Party. Gedda, on the other hand, is now maneuvering in search of rapprochement with the Right Wing. There is, of course, a notorious and well-published political dispute between Veronese and Gedda, but the ease with which either could, if and when necessary, be thrown overboard by the Vatican, leads one to wonder whether this difference of opinion is as deep-rooted as it seems.

CONFIDENTIAL/CONTROL - U.S. OFFICIALS ONLY